

SENATE BILL 54

By Finney R.

AN ACT to name a segment of U.S. Highway 411 in Blount and Sevier counties in honor of Governor Sam Houston.

WHEREAS, Sam Houston is a seminal figure in this nation's history, having positively impacted the intertwined destinies of Tennessee and Texas; and

WHEREAS, as a youth, Sam Houston cast off traditional society to live with the Cherokees, thus beginning a lifetime association with the tribe that would prove mutually beneficial; and

WHEREAS, after teaching the children of Maryville "reading, ciphering, and the ways of the Indians," Sam Houston enlisted in the 39th Infantry during the War of 1812, and his bravery in battle and war-hardened fortitude gained the attention of Major General Andrew Jackson during the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, in which he was severely wounded; and

WHEREAS, after the completion of the war, Sam Houston would mature to become one of this State's and this Nation's finest leaders; and

WHEREAS, he served as the Attorney General for the Nashville District prior to being elected from Andrew Jackson's Democratic Party as Tennessee's Ninth District Congressman in 1823, and

WHEREAS, after serving two terms in Congress, Sam Houston was elected Governor of Tennessee in 1827, but he soon abandoned the political realm and became a citizen of the Cherokee Nation in 1829; and

WHEREAS, leaving the Cherokee Nation to join the fight for Texas independence in 1835, he served as a delegate at the Texas Convention, which culminated in the declaration of independence from Mexico; and

WHEREAS, Sam Houston was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Republic of Texas in 1836, and expertly led his troops to victory over Santa Anna in the Battle of

San Jacinto and independence; he was elected the first President of the Republic of Texas later that same year; and

WHEREAS, he was elected to the U.S. Senate following Texas' admission into the Union, serving from 1846 to 1859, and he served as Governor of Texas prior to the War Between the States; and

WHEREAS this General Assembly desires to designate a segment of U.S. Highway 411 as the "Governor Sam Houston Memorial Highway" as a lasting tribute to one of the most important and influential leaders in the history of this great nation and its sister states of Tennessee and Texas; and

WHEREAS, this designation is especially appropriate because Sam Houston began his illustrious career teaching at a small log-cabin school in Maryville; he would later state that his term as a teacher bestowed upon him his greatest sense of pride and achievement, saying "I experienced a higher feeling of dignity and self-satisfaction than from any office or honor which I have since held."; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the segment of U.S. Highway 411 from the Blount County - Loudon County boundary northeastward to such highway's intersection with U. S. Highway 441 (Chapman Highway) in Sevier County is hereby designated the "Governor Sam Houston Memorial Highway" to honor the memory and celebrate the bountiful life of this great pioneer and statesman who served as Governor of both Tennessee and Texas.

SECTION 2. The department of transportation is directed to erect suitable signs or to affix suitable markers designating the segment of U. S. Highway 411 described in Section 1 as the "Governor Sam Houston Memorial Highway".

SECTION 3. The erection of such signs shall be within the guidelines prescribed by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

SECTION 4. This act shall become operative only if the federal highway administrator advises the commissioner of transportation in writing that the provisions of this act shall not

render Tennessee in violation of federal laws and regulations and subject to penalties prescribed therein.

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.